

## The Church Dormant

REVEREND JOSEPH KEATING, S.J.

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**A**MONGST the various parables wherein Christ Our Lord revealed different aspects of the "Kingdom of Heaven," His future Church, and of its fortunes on earth, few are so graphic in themselves or have been so strikingly fulfilled as that of the "Cockle and the Wheat." From the first the Divine Founder has let us know that His Church, whatever its ideal—"glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish"—was not actually to be a Society of the Perfect. The parable demolished in anticipation the Montanist heresy. The future Kingdom of God, however imperishable, was destined to suffer from the attacks of God's enemies, and its misfortunes were to be, at least partially, due to the unworthiness of its own citizens. Our Lord based His imagery on an actual Eastern practice. If what the enemy did in the darkness was to cause the wheat to shrivel and grow sterile, and yet leave it capable of reviving, the figure would have better expressed the fact. For the bad or indifferent Christian does not differ in species from the good, as the darnel does from the wheat, and through God's grace, may become again, before Death, the reaper, puts an end to growth, both faithful and fruitful. However, the main point of the parable is that the damage was done "while men slept." If the farmer, knowing he had an enemy, had watched to prevent his designs, his field would not have suffered. If the faithful, compassed round with foes, sleep instead of waking, they are responsible for the harm which they suffer in consequence, or cause others to suffer. The treasure of the Faith can be preserved only by watchfulness. But watchfulness is wearying. Thus it is that scandal cometh; the children of light make void their prerogative by shutting their eyes close, whilst the children of this world, wiser and more watchful, wreak their wicked will on the harvest of God's sowing.

Was it not "while men slept" that heresy destroyed the unity of Christendom in the sixteenth century? Too late was accomplished at Trent that "reformation in head and members," the postponement of which occasioned the revolt, and which, when it came, could only arrest the plague and could not regain the lost provinces of the Church. Because then the faithful were not faith-full, and left large regions of their being and activity unaffected by their creed, abuses were allowed so to disguise the lineaments of the Bride of Christ that the perverse could pretend that her identity was lost and set about fashioning a Church of their own. And later, in those various Christian States which the Faith had carved out of barbarism, the want of practical Catholicity tolerated a crop of social evils which, in the end, issued in the outbreak of The Terror. If the principles of justice and charity taught in the Gospels, and practised so strikingly two centuries before by St. Vincent de Paul and his followers, had had any real vogue in eighteenth century France, the feudal abuses and the common oppression of the poor which furnished the fuel for that blaze, would have been detected and corrected in time. And so it has always been. The contrast between the profession of a religion of justice and brotherly love, and the actual acquiescence in a system of cruel selfishness and pride, must needs provoke the rejection of a faith which seems to have no connection with good works, the uprooting of a tree the apparent fruits of which are so manifestly evil. The bad Catholic is ever a greater enemy of the Church than the unbeliever.

Since we know for certain that righteousness exalteth a nation, that a Catholic population, living on the whole in accordance with its belief, will be cultured, prosperous and stable, we may gather from a survey of history how rare and remote has been the approach to that ideal. The observance of the Commandments, showing so clearly how both God and neighbor are to be loved, would make impossible those prevalent social evils against the injustice of which the human spirit always and rightly rebels. If they exist and flourish in a Catholic nation, that is a sign that men are sleeping, that the range therein of the Church Dormant exceeds that of the Church proper, that the way is wide open for the evil designs of the enemy. For toleration of injustice towards men means little regard for the

rights of God: the last seven Commandments cannot be freely violated without the first three being practically ignored.

To qualify for the ranks of the Church Dormant, one need not be wholly reprobate. That division of the Church includes, indeed, those who have denied the Faith, either formally or in practice, who are Catholics only in name, but whose retention of the name brings on it shame and discredit. These nominal Catholics are indeed asleep, however multiplied and intense be their secular activities, for their eyes are wholly closed to the true spiritual values. They are, let us hope, few in comparison to the hosts whose Catholicity, genuine enough, is only partially realized, who know enough and practice enough to keep within the Church, but who, being passengers rather than rowers, help but little in the progress of Peter's Bark. They do not precisely bury their Talent, but they trade so feebly with it that they add little to their Master's wealth. They have let themselves be conformed to this world to such an extent that they do not react, as Christians should, to the sin and sorrow of earth. This Church Dormant is a tremendous handicap on the religious purposes of the Church Militant, those Catholics who look on life *sub specie aeternitatis*, and pause not in their struggles with the world, the flesh, and the devil. Just as, in the present break-down of the modern industrial system, those who work and produce wealth are bowed down with the support of multitudes who cannot earn their living, so the army of the genuine faithful is always being hampered and opposed and discredited and over-burdened, not only by the existence of those who have given up Catholic practices, the real apostates, but even more by the legions of the half-baked and the weak-kneed, those whom de Mun used politely to call "honorary Catholics." If the world remains for the most part unconverted, it is because those to whom God has given the means and opportunity of turning it to Himself are either positive sources of scandal, "worse than the infidel," or, through ignorance or mere apathy, have contracted spiritual sleeping-sickness and only clog the activities of those who work.

The recent overthrow of Catholicity in Mexico and Spain brings home to us unmistakably the inevitable consequences that await the Church Dormant at the hands of its

sleepless foes. I am quite prepared to be told that these countries are full of pious Catholics, looked after by zealous clergy, and faithful to their religious duties as they conceive them. My point is that their conception of their religious duties must have been inadequate, if it did not lead them to organize their forces, not merely to defend faith and morals against the corruption of the world, but also to remove the social injustices, toleration of which must necessarily discredit the Christian profession. If so many in those countries came to think so wrongly of the Catholic religion as to prefer the ideals of Communism, the question arises—were they ever really taught the Faith? I do not only mean—had they the chance of learning the catechism? No doubt, the Church did what it could, with the resources at its command, and under the restrictions imposed by a hostile or careless bureaucracy. But was the Catholic Faith made manifest in the example, social and industrial, of Catholics of leisure and education? Had the poor the Gospel preached to them in this practical fashion by seeing it embodied in the social philosophy of the well-to-do, in the exercise of those works of social reform which are the natural fruits of true Catholicism? If Catholic working-classes, so hampered by material conditions in the practice of religion, fall away from the Faith, part at least of the blame must lie at the doors of their more favored brethren who, with vastly better opportunities, have failed to realize and express that practical altruism which is of the essence of their Faith. They have slept whilst the Marxian has sown in the hearts of the toilers the false tenets of his materialism. Unless the members of the Church, like its Founder “go about doing good,” they cannot commend their Faith to the world. It was His zeal for the relief of the unfortunate that was the main characteristic of the mission of Christ, and that zeal has remained with His Church ever since. It revolutionized the pagan world by restoring the appreciation of human dignity and liberty, crowning with a divine sanction the essential worth of every human soul. It became the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor!

God forbid that Catholics in this free country should not feel the fullest compassion for the persecuted Church, whether in Spain or Mexico or elsewhere. “Whom God loves He chastiseth” may apply to nations as well as to in-

dividuals. And His Providence has surely high and wise reasons for permitting the insolence and injustice of the atheist to oppress, for a time, His people in those hapless lands. But He also may want us, who are so far free, to learn a lesson from their experiences and to provide against the like by analyzing their causes. And if we find or suspect an undue proportion of the Church Dormant in those countries, it is only that we may be stirred to examine our own religious condition and to realize better the possible results of our own slackness. Men, alas! are everywhere sleeping, notwithstanding the menace of the times, and the constant exhortations of their leaders to wake and watch and pray. If we Catholics in these islands are to maintain our liberties and extend God's Kingdom, the interests of that Kingdom must be our unceasing care. We must do our very best to convert our liabilities into assets, to arouse our sleeping members to the vigilance and activity that their faith requires of them, to realize our own debt to the world, in the midst of which, as the leaven in the dough, Our Lord has placed His Church.

In the midst of this non-Catholic community, members of the Church can enjoy the advantages, as regards discipline and preparedness, which an army enjoys in an enemy land. If we are prudent, we shall remain habitually on the *qui vive*: we shall look to our weapons and keep them sharpened and primed: we cannot afford to relax our vigilance. Our liberties have been won for us, in face of dungeon, fire and sword, by our persecuted and martyred ancestors: our task is to preserve them from the assaults of more insidious foes, the poisoned atmosphere and the infectious example of a Godless world. Our Faith remains today the strongest and most vital influence in a land, where for three centuries or more it was trodden under foot, whilst the "Church" which tried to supplant it, is kept from disintegration under the corrosion of private judgment only by the bonds and fetters of State establishment. But the very collapse of institutional religion around us exposes us to new perils and new responsibilities. The organized atheism of Russia is already meeting with sympathy amongst our After-Christians, who have abandoned, along with the Faith, the morality of Christianity. We now are beginning to experience what the first Christians underwent who had to



shield the pure principles of the Gospel from the corruptions of paganism. It was their uncompromising assertion of those principles, sealed often by the testimony of their blood, that finally routed Antichrist, and there is the same need today, as there was then, for that clear-cut, unswerving, open adhesion to the Christian code, if Christian civilization is to be saved.

Yet it is the constant policy of the Church Dormant which, as we said, is unawake only to spiritual values, to minimize the fundamental opposition between the Church and the World, to blur the edges of the Faith, to try to deprive the leaven of those qualities which, in contact with alien substances, produce a ferment. The children of that Church are sent to non-Catholic schools, lest their prospects in *this* world should be harmed; the women of that Church slavishly follow the indecent fashions of the world: the *litterateurs* of that Church, in their own writings and in their criticisms of others, frankly abandon the Christian moral standard: its rank and file reduce their observance of Catholic obligations to a minimum, and are careful to hide whatever might betray the fact of their Catholicity. Some, as we have said, the more effectually to do so, give up obedience to the Faith altogether, make invalid "marriages," practise divorce and birth prevention, tolerate usury, and oppress the poor, just like the unbelievers around them. And this rebellion, and this apathy and unconcern, are persisted in, notwithstanding reiterated commands, exhortations and appeals from the pastors who have charge of us. I may recall some words on this sad phenomenon, written last February in the *Month*:

The tragedy of our times is [not so much the "leakage" amongst the poor and uneducated, but] the spectacle of so many of our educated classes, endowed with an inheritance of such incomparable worth, which confers the freedom that springs from truth, the peace that goes with security, the strength that is based on certainty, possessing in their Faith the one key to the mysteries of life, and a guide and stimulus to the highest development of human nature, privileged, in a word, beyond millions of their fellows, yet feebly renouncing all that fair heritage at the first challenge of the Godless world, and becoming inevitably worse than those who lack their advantage.

Let us not allow the admirable energy of the Church Militant in this country, which is almost daily adding to the

number of its Churches, and multiplying its religious institutions and schools, which finds vent in a vast variety of lay-societies connected, in one way or another, with the spread of the Faith, which reaches its highest peak in the devoted lives of the pastoral clergy and the multitudinous educational and charitable achievements of its Religious Orders and Congregations of both sexes, blind us to the fact that, in spite of our being encamped on hostile territory, those who thus realize the obligations of their Faith are possibly in a minority, that, either through ignorance or worldliness or actual perversion, multitudes of our fellow-Catholics are asleep, so far as the work which they might do for God is concerned. Our leaders are calling for immediate and intensive action on our part, but there is so far little enthusiasm for the new crusade amongst our ranks. For ten whole years, from his inaugural Encyclical in December, 1922, to his recent protest against the Mexican persecution, the Holy Father has been summoning Catholics with ever-increasing urgency to a fuller sense of their privileges and responsibilities. The economic chaos of the world is but a material reflection of that moral confusion which the abandonment of the Christian ideal has caused, and which, when not counteracted formally by those who possess the Faith, is affecting even the children of the Church. It is, therefore, not open to Catholics to be neutral or indifferent in regard to such grave issues as the Pope has in mind—international peace, the integrity of the family, Christian education, the maldistribution of wealth, the war between classes, the excesses of bureaucracy and nationalism. "He that is not with Me is against Me," and how can we be with Him if we do nothing in response to the summons of His Vicar? If the Catholic world as a whole had not been asleep when Leo XIII began his campaign for social justice, and if its millions had not neglected, through sloth, to preach and apply the economic teaching of the Pope, we should not today be suffering from the terrible consequences of blind mammon-worship. Are we still asleep in regard to this all-important matter of sociology? What are we doing to prepare the younger generation for the weighty task that must be theirs—to restore the social order to the guidance of Christian morality?

It may be answered—we are doing a great deal. When

we contemplate the imposing list of our organized lay-Societies—the Society of St. Vincent of Paul, about to celebrate the tercentenary of its institution, the more ancient Third Order of St. Francis, an army over three million strong, of which Leo XIII said—"it is by means of the Third Order that I desire to revivify humanity"—and which only the other day Archbishop Downey summoned to meet the new advance of Red Communism, those active modern institutions, the Social Guild and Evidence Guild, the Legion of Mary, whose salutary activites are spreading from Ireland to our shores, the Apostolic League for the Conversion of England, still only a few years old, and others, literally too numerous to mention, we may be tempted to think that there is no need for a new and further effort, and that our authorities, in urging us to it so loudly and emphatically and insistently, are pushing an open door. But those who are associated with the direction of those various Societies know only too well how comparatively meagre is their membership, and how difficult to maintain. The Church Dormant, so pre-occupied with worldly affairs, holds aloof from them, is, indeed, often totally ignorant of them, for it does not read the Catholic Press; in any case, it feels no zest for what they are working for, since it has ceased to experience any zeal for God's glory. In spite, then, of our imposing array of associations, which resemble rather the cadres of an army than a fully made-up force, there is every need for the "Ecclesia docens" to cry out without ceasing and raise its voice like a clarion, as our Holy Father has done, since the enemy does not sleep, nay, was never more awake than today. But the necessary social teaching must be formal, definite and systematic, as is the doctrine of the adversary. And it must begin with the young.

Recently, the counsels of the Cardinal Archbishop and of the Archbishop of Birmingham, addressed to the boys of Cotton College (and through them to the Catholic youth of England) regarding the part they would have to play in the coming struggle with Antichrist, were mentioned in these pages. The following outspoken words of the latter deserve further emphasis. Speaking of the future clergy and the social question, he said:

I think we want priests better educated than we have had in the past. The question today is—Is England going to be Christian or pagan? . . . If any system is to take the place of Christianity, it is likely to be Communism. The only remedy against Communism is the social teaching of the Catholic Church. Yet how many priests can explain that teaching in a way that will attract people. We want priests who will deal with modern difficulties and dangers. The Catholic laymen can also play a part. The days of quietly practising one's religion and nothing else are over. The recent history of Spain and Mexico has taught us that. What we want is organized Catholic action on the part of laymen [he was speaking, remember, to a boys' school] if the Church is to fight the dangers of today.

Communism professes to be a remedy for human injustice, especially in social and industrial matters. Owing largely to the ignorance and unconcern of her own children, the world does not know how thoroughly the Church detests that injustice and how zealously she tries to remedy it. The Archbishop was not speaking to an ecclesiastical seminary and, therefore, he clearly implied that, even for youths at school, who might or might not be called to the priesthood, Christian sociology should be a part of their training. It is thus that the Church must meet the new menace of the age. One of the most deplorable aspects of the Soviet anti-God campaign, is the systematic corruption of the young, who are taught to scorn and hate the religion of Christ. Even here there are Red Sunday Schools functioning with the same diabolical purpose. The least the Church can do is to arm her own children with that sociological training which meets the specific atheist point of attack. The battle has to be begun in the schools.

Happily, we have lately been assured that it has definitely so begun. The Church Dormant is waking up. For some time past a well-informed and zealous writer, calling himself "Minimus," has been urging, in the *Catholic Times*, that some measure of sociology should be taught, perhaps in conjunction with the religious lesson with which it is akin, in all our schools. Not otherwise, he avers, can that clear Papal injunction in "Quadragesimo Anno" to the world's hierarchies be carried out:

It is your chief duty, Venerable Brethren, and that of your clergy to seek diligently, to select prudently, and to train fittingly, these Apostles [of Christian sociology] amongst working-men and amongst employers.

Now a correspondent in the same paper (November 11th) informs us that social science, based on the Papal Encyclicals, has already been introduced into several schools in the Birmingham Archdiocese with excellent results. Up to this time, the Catholic Social Guild, by its Study Club in seminaries, and its Study-Courses in a number of schools: not to speak of its Labor College at Oxford; has been alone in trying to arouse a social sense in the Catholic public, young and old. It will rejoice that now others will share the burden. And both teachers and taught will continue to receive valuable guidance from the Catholic weekly press, both here and in the States, with its reports of important doctrinal utterances, its constant exposition of Christian social principles, its essentially critical attitude towards all political and economic theories which are not inspired by Catholic tradition. No more will these influences be successfully evaded by the Church Dormant, hitherto caused more by want of knowledge than by want of will. It is by providing the young with the requisite knowledge and firing their zeal by the spectacle of the world's need, that a beginning can be made of restoring to Society the ideals of social justice. It would seem that those who are so anxious to stem the leakage had somehow overlooked one cause of it in this lack of social instruction.

Reports from Ireland, moreover, show that many Catholic leaders are increasingly aware of this crying need. We read in the *Universe* (November 11th) that the "League of the Kingdom of Christ" has elaborated a Catholic Social Programme, presumably for use in schools. Both teachers and pupils will find in Father Cahill's "The Framework of the Christian State," reviewed in our October issue, a most valuable text-book for that subject, which makes full use of the Papal Encyclicals. And already there is much helpful literature extant for school use, such as Mr. H. Somerville's manual of civics, "Who is my Neighbour?" and the C.S.G. publications.

But it is in the United States of America, where the relations between Capital and Labor are still characterized by a rampant individualism, where there are few remedies for the anomalies of Capitalism, no health or unemployment insurance, no old-age pensions, no general workman's compensation system,—it is there, where the need is greatest,

that Catholics have responded most energetically to the Pope's exhortations. There the National Catholic Educational Association have prepared a "Syllabus on Social Problems" the purpose of which is,—to quote an account in *The Commonwealth* for October 26th—"that every graduate of a Catholic college or university in the United States be henceforth equipped with at least a fundamental grounding in Catholic social doctrines, and that every graduate know the programme of action in this arena laid down by Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, and the reigning Pontiff." And we are further told that "it points the way to social instruction in the high schools and even in the parochial [elementary] schools as well." Judging from the summary sketched in *The Commonwealth*, this "Syllabus" is very radical and thorough, presenting a sound and consistent philosophy of social relations, to meet the unsound yet consistent philosophy of Marx. Marx, and his followers, despite the false basis on which they build, have created a formidable system of unethical economics which sways the minds of millions and affects even those who, as Christians, should know better. Are we, who possess, in the social teaching of the Church, a solid foundation of guaranteed truth, to be content to leave it derelict, as far as those whom we profess to educate are concerned? How disloyal should we be to the behests of our spiritual leaders, how blind to the perils of our times, how unworthy of our priceless endowment of Faith, if we do not determine that the new generations shall be properly equipped for the new tasks to which the Church calls them! Even the old, unenlightened world is conscious of the *impasse* into which its earth-bound desires have led it, and looks in desperation for a means of escape. "A New Spirit in Industry," "A New Code of International Relations," "A Way of Recovery," "A Renewal of National Life," "A Guide out of Chaos"—books and pamphlets innumerable have been published on these and similar themes. And the Pope himself, the only sure guide amongst them all, took for motto at the beginning of his reign—"To Restore all Things in Christ." Recalling and expanding the teaching of Pope Leo, our Holy Father points the way to escape the collapse of civilization. A World Conference has been convened, in the attempt to introduce order and restraint into what has become a cut-throat scramble amongst

the nations of the world for the material goods which the earth produces. What hope is there of any success unless Christian social teaching is listened to? "How shall men hear without a preacher?" It is for Catholics to bring the Pope's remedies to the knowledge of the non-Catholic world and to do so effectually they must labor the more to deplete the ranks of the Church Dormant.

May one humbly suggest that this urgent and grave question may, at the very next meeting of the Catholic Head Masters, or of the teaching Congregations of Catholic nuns, be given the attention it deserves? May one even presume to hope that the Hierarchy mean to commend it to the consideration of the Catholic Education Council, so that it may be given a place in our Training Colleges? Nay, whom does it concern more than our future priests, who cannot in these modern days, exercise their pastorate with proper fruit, unless they have expert acquaintance with the complicated industrial system under which so many of their flocks live and suffer? Never was the conflict between God and Mammon for the soul of man more intense than in our day, and the Church, which was primarily instituted to lead men to happiness hereafter, will be judged by what she can do, and what she tries to do, to save him from degradation here. Others, with less sure guidance, with less strong motives, with less powerful help, are laboring zealously for the redress of social grievances on Christian lines and, if I have not dwelt on widespread Anglican and Nonconformist enterprises, it is not because they have not been borne admirably in mind. But my words are to those of the household who are allowing to exist more than the inevitable "lag" between their Faith and their works, and to them I say, with St. Paul—"Now is the time for you to arise from sleep."

## A Plan for Articulate Laymen

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THE week of November 20-27 may well be looked on in future years as the starting point of a new era in Catholic life in the United States. After years of waiting, and months of hesitation since Pope Pius XI issued his call to them in "Quadragesimo Anno," groups of college-bred laymen in four parts of the country got together in conference to consider the bearings of our social philosophy on our national life and economy, and took steps to translate that philosophy in terms of national planning.

The National Catholic Alumni Federation, which sponsored these conferences, is the natural, and indeed inevitable, instrument by which the Pope's ideas, which are merely the millennial Catholic tradition, will be brought to bear on our national problems. The future progress of the movement thus started will be watched with sympathetic anxiety.

At the same time, in New York, a League for Social Justice was launched over the signature of several laymen. Its requirements are simple. It is not a new society, it has no officers and no organization. It simply asks of its members a pledge to inform themselves of the Catholic doctrine on social justice, to live it in their religious, social, and business lives, and moreover, to hear Mass once a week besides Sunday, and to receive Communion once a month, and weekly if possible, for the intention that social justice, which is the Kingdom of God on earth, may be attained in the United States. It is just such a practical combination of the spiritual with the intellectual that may be counted on to supply the force that will bring the Alumni enterprise to a successful conclusion. The League has an office at 30 West Sixteenth Street, New York, from which information and pledge cards can be obtained.

Now, if Catholic college graduates are to undertake a common study of our economic system, ending with a

comprehensive plan adaptable in detail for our American scene, where are they to begin?

Obviously, the first step is one of *criticism* of the present system. In this critical process, there is need of a *criterion* as a guide; and this will depend entirely on a correct understanding of our social philosophy. Thus, a Socialist, with his particular philosophy in mind, will consider certain aspects of the system to be wrong which we would retain, and the same would be true on other matters of the Individualist. For an example, we will demand some system of administering private property in production, against the Socialist, even though we may agree with him in his criticisms of how private property has been administered, while against the Individualist we will maintain the right of society to limit private property.

Then, this critical process completed, with both superficial and essential defects duly catalogued and appraised, a constructive *program* will need to be devised. Here the dominating *idea* will have to be prepared and polished until it stands out like a light. This idea will have to be made so clear that every step in the building process will conform to it. As Judge Dore said at the Fordham Conference, it was an idea which brought on the present disaster and according to that idea a whole edifice arose which proved unstable precisely because in its last analysis that idea was anarchy, and unsuited to build any edifice that would last. The dominating idea for the new edifice must be one formed out of reality, not from a priori reasoning as the old one was; and that reality must be the human reality, not a materialistic one.

The important thing in this critical process is to keep two things distinct: the defects which are defects precisely because they do not conform to the dominating idea of the present system and those defects which are defects of the dominating idea itself. Again, it is necessary to keep in mind another distinction, namely, the elementary one between causes and effects. Thus unemployment and over-production are effects derived from other causes deeply rooted, though they, too, result in other effects more on the surface.

Then, the system itself will have to be examined in each of its parts: first, the *idea* underlying it, which is that of

*laissez-faire*, of unlimited and unplanned competition, and secondly, the *elements* of the system, which are: capital, labor, their partnership, production, distribution, the consumer, and the State. The *defects* of each of these will have to be examined in turn, so that we can see clearly which are superficial and which are fundamental, which are causes and which are effects. This is important, because when we are building up a new system, we shall have to take care lest we are offering merely palliatives instead of a stable remedy.

In the *idea* governing the present system, I offer three fundamental *errors*, with acknowledgments to Thomas F. Woodlock:

1. The *moral error*: selfishness and greed; that is, the operation of the economic process with a view to individual or group profit *alone*, and not with a view to the total social good also;

2. The *economic error*: unlimited competition, under the fallacious guise of unlimited opportunity for all, which turned out to be the ideal system under which individual greed can operate;

3. The *political error*: unrestrained nationalism, which is merely the moral error of selfishness in the political order, so that nations operate for their own good *alone*, without regard to the international welfare.

The *elements* of the economic system operating along these false ideas will be found to contain, among others, these *fundamental defects*:

1. *Profits* constantly tend to gravitate into a few hands and to be saved; that is, to be re-invested into new producing capital; and this capital, under the system, results in a producing capacity which grows faster than its correlative, consuming capacity, does. This results in a constantly widening gap between them, until they can no longer be bridged. Profits then stop, and production with them, until consuming capacity catches up with produced goods, when the wheels theoretically will start again. The idea of *laissez-faire* contemplates these cycles, but considers that the adjustment will be automatic. This time, however, the automatic adjustment did not take place, which is probably a sign that consuming and producing capacities got too far apart.

2. *Labor*, under the system, cannot be done full justice

in producing industry if there is to be any profit in it. The laissez-faire idea also contemplates this fact, and Sir Arthur Salter, in "Recovery," lists as one of the causes of the downfall of laissez-faire the meddling with its automatic working by necessary labor-reform laws.

3. The *partnership* of labor and capital, resulting in industry, in "good times" yields a surplus which ethically belongs to both members of the team after wages for capital and labor have been paid. In "bad times" this surplus is arbitrarily used as wages for capital, and labor is laid off without wages, thus further reducing the buying power of the vast mass of the people at a time when it is most needed to consume the surplus of goods.

4. *Mass production* is incompatible with the laissez-faire system, which does not contemplate the correlative, mass consumption. Attempts were made before 1929 to make it fit in, by the expedients of advertising and instalment buying, that is, by creating wants and needs and extending credit to the buyer, both of which had defined limits, while mass production had no visible limits. The financial structure superimposed on mass production, on the other hand, was such that it had to have indefinite extension or collapse. Mass production is workable only in a system in which production capacity is rigidly controlled with a view to consumption.

5. *Distribution*, theoretically, should be almost unlimited. There is no reason why the hundreds of millions in Asia, Africa, and South America should not live at as high a standard of living as we here in the United States. There is no such thing as overproduction of goods here as long as those peoples are unsupplied with goods. Now they are starving in the midst of plenty. The fact that our system ruins itself when it produces to the very height of its capacity, that the farmers are impoverished by bumper crops, that scarcity is the normal cause of profit, is an essential indictment of the system.

6. The *consumer*, who is by definition the key point of the whole system, has not been considered at all; at least, he has been considered hopefully and vaguely as a consumer, but not as a *buyer*. Production has not been built up with any regard to whether the added product can and will be bought; production in each industry vies against it-

self, and each industry vies against the others, with no regard to the consideration of whether the whole load of consumption can be carried by the public. And since industry was carried on largely by borrowed money, and since these debts envisaged an inflated production, then, when consumption is deflated, the debts remain a crushing and impossible burden.

7. The *State*, as Pope Pius has pointed out, has allowed itself to be cluttered up with all sorts of irrelevant and useless functions. The Pope turns our attention to the true function of the State, which is not merely the enforcement of public order and the sacredness of contracts, on the one hand, nor the control of purely private and local affairs, on the other, but the reasoned and lofty direction of the social organism for social ends.

It is on those seven points, also, that the new edifice will be erected. It will revolve around these *principles*:

1. Social justice means that capitalization, production, and distribution proceed and grow only if the socially good or harmful effects are taken into consideration along with the individual profit to be made.

2. Profits must be restricted and savings curbed so that production will expand only in proportion as consuming capacity gradually grows throughout the world.

3. Long-term borrowing, it has been suggested, should end, and in its place should come some form of preferred equity ownership, gradual retirement, and management control, if necessary. Dana Skinner has proposed this.

4. Naturally all this means the replacement of our present anarchy in industry by a voluntary planned economy, to be reached in limited objectives, and in conformity with our Constitution.

## The Day of the Lord

G. K. CHESTERTON

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IN the New Year Encyclical which the Editor of the *Sunday Express* delivered *urbi et orbi* on the first of January, the faithful might find and reverently read the following paragraph:

If the world in 1933 obeys Jesus there will be no more hunger or want. The world slump will be ended. The wheels of credit, exchange, labor and trade will go round again.

*Infandum renovare dolorem!* A mere touch, and those wheels will go round again, those wheels we all, with such childish joy and innocence, loved to see going round. Those wheels that grind the faces of the poor; those wheels that deafened the children in the first factories; those wheels that throw a thousand men out of work; those wheels that stun and stupefy even the men who are in work; those wheels that were the weapons, in an endless civil war, of those lawless lords who "laid upon the toiling millions a yoke little better than slavery itself"; those wheels that have now for a hundred years roared around a blind giant who found himself truly, in Milton's words, "eyeless, in Gaza; at a mill, with slaves." But there are other promises even brighter and more hopeful than that of the slavery of Samson. Credit will return; the cosmopolitan system of credit, by which universal usury was like a giant with a hundred hands on a hundred throats, throttling the honor and liberty of a hundred nations. Exchange will return, and return to its old place, which is of course the first place in the human hierarchy; the kingdom and the power and the glory shall again belong to men who can only exchange; who cannot do anything else except exchange; who have not the wits or the force or fancy or freedom of mind or even the humor and patience to bring anything into existence; who can only barter and bargain, and generally

cheat, with the things that manlier men have made. These shall again be our princes and captains; and the men who only make things and grow things and produce things shall be led captive in chains behind them, as of old. Labor will return, as the servant of exchange; but the men who can perform the conjuring-tricks of exchange quickly enough will never need to do any labor at all; and will once more reach the loftiest order of millionaires without having ever done a stroke of work in their lives; except talking into telephones and having hurried conversations with stock-brokers. For this was the very principle of that divine Boom, which has now been for a time followed by the diabolic Slump. And it seems clear, in this particular scripture or oracle, that when the world slump is ended, the world boom will begin again. Trade will return, and resume its task of putting the trade mark on everything, even on the sky. It will go on with renewed energy to fill the very vault of heaven with the names of filthy medicines to cure foul diseases; destroying at a stroke the visionary mediaeval dogma that the heavens are incorruptible. It will turn all England into a suburb with hoardings instead of houses; and teach everybody Salesmanship, which is the culture of cads. It will bring back to us all these beautiful things; the admiration for boasts; the acceptance of bribes; the worship of the world's luckiest liars or most distinguished double-crossers who have somehow landed on the Lido instead of the Devil's Island; it will bring us back the complete rule of the few, the wealthy and the unworthy, as our great reward . . . always supposing, of course, that the world obeys Jesus.

It seems quite possible, and even probable, that it had not even so much as dawned on this writer that there is another view of the case. I suppose he would be quite surprised, if I told him that the one gleam of light, the one glimpse of hope, in all this darkness and despair, is the fact that it is just possible that we have seen the end of that abominable prosperity, and that those accursed things will not return; that credit will not return, to enable a money-lender in New York to ruin a countryside in Roumania; that exchange will not return, in the guise of a triumphant huckster and middleman, cheating the craftsman with bad wages or the customer with bad goods; that labor

will not return in the familiar form of slave-labor and every trade will no longer be a branch of the slave trade. There is only one really cheerful element in the situation; and that is that there really is a very good chance that these solid, practical, business-like things are dead for ever; that men will never really trust them again, having tried them and found whither they lead; and that they no longer have the power to help us, even if we were fools enough to let them try. There is only one good thing about the Slump; and that is that it may stop men from trusting again in the Boom. The one durable aspect of Unemployment is that it may possibly call a halt for the full comprehension of the more subtle horrors of Employment; especially that highly paid and heavily organized employment of which men like Mr. Ford were boasting, before the judgment struck them out of the sky. When all the promises of mere traders are perforce broken, when all the praises of mere trade have perforce become a jest, when all that was called practical has turned out to be a practical joke, and all that was called modern is in ruins more useless than Stonehenge—then, there is a very real psychological possibility that men may think of things forgotten; of property, of privacy, of piety in the old sense of reverence for the human sanctities; for the family, from the hearthstone to the headstone. If once men understood that London Bridge is really and truly broken down, they may possibly learn to swim, or learn to row, or learn to paddle their own canoes; or even, in the case of some strange poets or saints such as the world has known, learn to be reasonably happy even on their own side of the river. But for those to whom the paddling of all the little canoes of private property seems like primitive savagery, to those who are never happy anywhere, except in preparing to travel very rapidly somewhere else, to them I can only speak in words of more doubtful comfort. I would not introduce the greatest of names quite so lightly as does the *Sunday Express*, but I can refer its prophets to a minor prophet, somewhere in the Old Testament, who uttered these strange and somewhat disturbing words: "Woe unto you that desire the Day of the Lord. Wherefore should you desire the Day of the Lord? It is darkness and not light."